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ABSTRACT

Two statewide surveys of Texas public school teachers who were members of the Texas State Teachers Association were conducted in 1980 and in 1982. The 1980 survey, with 291 respondents, revealed that many teachers were considering leaving teaching. Of these, almost half cited low salaries as the chief reason. The survey also revealed that holding a job during the school year as well as working during the summer was common among the respondents, although most of the summer jobs were in a very low paying category. The results of the survey conducted in 1982, with 319 respondents, indicated that a crisis in education still exists in Texas. Low salary remained the reason, given by more than one in three teachers, for seriously considering leaving the teaching profession. Nearly 30 percent of those surveyed were moonlighting to supplement their salaries. Teachers in Texas earned only 68 percent of what was needed to support a family of 4 in a middle-class but not affluent fashion. The rapid decline in real earning power that was observed in 1980 was checked over the past 2 years, due to larger than average salary increases. However, teaching salaries made no gain on the cost of living. Current findings offer no reason to revise the earlier prediction of a severe teacher shortage in Texas. It is planned that this study will be repeated every 2 years for the remainder of the decade. The 1982 survey questionnaire is appended to this report as well as a table comparing results of the 1980 and 1982 surveys. (JD)

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Moonlighting, Salary, Morale, and the Approaching Teacher Shortage: A Follow-up Study

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October, 1982

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Prelude

Two years ago we presented the findings from a statewide survey of Texas public school teachers (Maddux, Henderson and Darby, 1981). That study was inspired by our belief that for the previous several years we had witnessed a serious deterioration of morale among public school teachers who were enrolling in our graduate classes. At the same time, we agreed that increasing numbers of these practicing teachers seemed to be experiencing financial difficulty. Many reported they were being forced to "moonlight" in order to meet their monthly living expenses.

We wondered just how common these problems were among Texas school teachers. Ornstein (1980) provided us with a shocking look at what has happened nation-wide with respect to teacher salaries and buying power since 1969. The national average teaching salary in 1969-1970 was $8,635. That figure increased to $16,001 for the 1979-1980 year, an average increase of 6.3 percent per year. But Ornstein (1980) points out that any increase must be looked at in terms of buying power. When he considered inflation by looking at the consumer price index, he found it increased **faster** *than salaries, at an average rate of 8 percent per year. Since salaries increased at only 6.3 percent per year, the result was a decrease in buying power of 1.7 percent per year. In other words, Ornstein showed that teachers' purchasing power had decreased a total of 17 percent between 1969 and 1980.*

We approached the Texas State Teacher's Association with a proposal to survey a random sample of their 10,000 members in order to begin to understand how these economic conditions were affecting teachers in Texas. TSTA was interested and agreed to fund the project. A questionnaire was developed, piloted, revised, and mailed to 424 randomly selected TSTA members in May of 1980. A final return of 291 questionnaires (70 percent) was obtained.

Even though we were expecting dramatic findings, we found the results both shocking and depressing. After analyzing the data, we reported that the questionnaires "Painted a picture of Texas teachers who face daily economic hardship and acute discouragement" (Maddux, Henderson & Darby, 1981). Twenty-two percent of the sample reported that they were moonlighters, with most of these holding menial, low-paying extra jobs. Sixty-four percent of the moonlighters indicated that they thought their extra job interfered with their teaching effectiveness. We reported that more than one in three teachers indicated that they were seriously considering leaving teaching as a profession. Forty-six percent listed low pay as the reason. We predicted that a new and painful teacher shortage was on the horizon.

The study created a minor stir about the state. Both wire services picked up the story and articles appeared in most newspapers in Texas. Radio and television stations interviewed us, and we were asked to present our findings at several national and international conferences. We spoke whenever anyone would listen. And we approached TSTA with the idea of repeating the study every two years in order to help identify any trends. They agreed, and the second questionnaire went out to 491 randomly selected TSTA members in May of 1982. A return rate of 65 percent resulted in 319 questionnaires analyzed. The attached Table One represents the 1982 questionnaire.
Table 2 presents some of the data from both the 1980 and the 1982 studies.

MOONLIGHTING, SALARY, MORALE, AND THE APPROACHING TEACHER SHORTAGE: A FOLLOW-UP STUDY

Two years ago we presented the findings from a statewide survey of Texas public school teachers (Maddux, Henderson, and Darby, 1981). That study was inspired by our belief that for the previous several years we had witnessed a serious deterioration of morale among public school teachers who were enrolling in our graduate classes. At the same time, we agreed that increasing numbers of these practicing teachers seemed to be experiencing financial difficulty. Many reported they were being forced to "moonlight" in order to meet their monthly living expenses.

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* INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE *
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Table 2 presents some of the data from both the 1980 and the 1982 studies.

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* INSERT TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE *

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Inspection of the table reveals some interesting data. First of all, the average teacher received an increase in pay of $3238, bringing salaries to an average of $17,351 per year. This represents an increase of nearly 23% over the two-year period. In order for these figures to be meaningful, we can compare the average teaching salary to the "intermediate standard budget", a figure set yearly by the U. S. Department of Labor as the amount of income required for a family of four to live in a solidly middle-class, but not affluent fashion. In 1980, we used the 1979 intermediate standard budget since the 1980 one had not yet been set. That figure was $20,856 for Fall, 1979. That meant that the average teacher in the study in 1980 fell short of the 1979 mark by $6,743.11. Another way of saying this is that the average teacher in 1980 earned less than 68% of what was needed in 1979 in order to support a family of four in middle class fashion. When the 1980 intermediate family budget was published, we discovered that it was actually $22,942, so that teachers were even further behind than our calculations showed. We

remarked at the time, that this must be particularly serious for the 30% of respondents in Texas who reported thay they had no working spouse.

How do the 1982 figures compare? Once again, we must rely on last year's figures from the U. S. Department of Labor. The Fall 1981 intermediate standard budget has been set at $25,407. Since the 1982 average salary was $17,351, the average Texas teacher is now $8056 below the mark. The average teacher still makes about 68% of what was needed last year to live in the middle class.

A depressing picture, to be sure, but things could be worse. Ornstein (1980) charted mean teaching salary in the United States next to the intermediate standard budget for the years 1969 through 1980. In 1979 the percentage of the intermediate standard budget earned by teachers first fell below 80%. Ornstein then calculated the average yearly salary increase of public school teachers for 1969 through 1980 (6.3%), and projected that to obtain potential salaries for each year through 1990. He then estimated the intermediate standard budget for each of those years by assuming an annual inflation rate of 10%. Using these figures, in 1990, the average teacher would earn only 52.7% of the intermediate standard budget! It appears that Texas teachers have been granted an increase in pay over the last two years in excess of the average increase in the past.

That, at least, is somewhat encouraging, even though the amount of increase in pay has merely prevented teachers from falling any farther behind. Nothing has been gained, however, in terms of real buying power.

Before we begin congratulating ourselves, let us consider some of the other data from the 1982 survey. We again find more than one in every three teachers (37.3%) seriously considering giving up teaching as a profession. When asked why, 50% (versus 46% in 1980) listed low pay. We find this particularly disturbing in light of what we know about the values of young people who enter teaching. In the past, numerous studies have shown that teachers have not been money-oriented. As recent as 1980, Farrell reported that the number one category of reasons reported by undergraduate students as their motivation for entering teaching as a profession was "social". The social category included statements about liking children and liking to work with them. Farrell (1980) concluded by saying that "reading essays about why people want to teach is a refreshing experience". As we have worked with our survey, we have not found it a refreshing experience. Something unpleasant is happening to teachers and their attitudes after they leave the university and enter their profession. We believe that they are losing some of their idealism in the face of financial difficulty due to low salaries.

The 119 teachers who reported they were seriously considering leaving the teaching profession listed 140 reasons. Fifty percent were financial. Twenty-four percent were related to working conditions such as stress, paperwork, hassles with administrators, class size, and burnout.Thirteen percent were comments related to students and included concerns about discipline and student attitudes and apathy. Six percent were thinking of retiring, four percent were thinking of jobs in business and industry, and three percent were classified as miscellaneous. Many respondents included lenghthy comments. One teacher remarked that "A young couple simply can't win on the present salary scale". Another wrote "I don't want to quit teaching, I really love it, but today's youth are more difficult to motivate, parents don't care to cooperate, and the paperwork is burdening". A third commented that "The only good thing about my salary is that I qualified for a low income housing loan from FMHA".

Once again, the survey revealed that holding ajob during the school year (moonlighting) and working during the summer is common, and is apparently becoming more so. Twnety-nine percent of those surveyed versus 22% in 1980 indicated that they are moonlighting. Thirty-six percent hold extra summer jobs, compared to only 30% in 1980. Fifty-nine percent of the moonlighters are the major

breadwinners in their households. More than 54% of all moonlighters indicate that they are seriously considering giving up teaching.

The survey reveals that respondents are making more money moonlighting but enjoying it less, since the average moonlighter supplemented his salary by $3189 this year vs. $2799 in 1980. Almost 69% of these moonlighting teachers indicated that their teaching is adversely affected by the second job, up almost 5% from 1980. Once again, the moonlighting jobs appear to be very low pay, since the average respondent reports spending 11.9 hrs. per week on the second job. Many menial jobs were listed, such as driving a bus, working on a farm, delivering newspapers, working as a handyman, doing yardwork, and working as a janitor.

Seventy-five percent of moonlighters in both 1980 and 1982 indicated that they would quit moonlighting if their salaries were increased sufficiently. In 1980, the mean increase deemed sufficient was $3399 yearly, in 1982 the amount was $4,750 yearly.

As in the 1980 study, we find males in a particularly disadvantageous situation. Over 42% of the moonlighting teachers are male, even though less than 20% of the entire sample is male. In addition, 78% of all males versus 31% of all females are the major bread winners in their

households. Some of the above figures may help explain why there are so few male teachers in the state of Texas. Even though 16% of elementary teachers in the United States are male, only 6 % of surveyed Texas teachers are male. Again, we find this particularly unfortunate in view of the high percentage of children who now live or will live in homes without a male adult (one half or more by some estimates) and in view of the general agreement as to the importance of a male model for young boys to emulate. It is quite likely that the scarcity of males in teaching in Texas is due to the fact that males have better access to higher paying jobs than do females. Approximately 43% of male teachers versus 36% of female teachers are considering leaving teaching.

Discussion

We can only echo our findings from two years ago. We concluded in 1980 that a state of crisis in education existed in Texas. More than one in three teachers is seriously considering giving up teaching, and low salary remains the major reason for dissatisfaction. Nearly thirty percent of all those surveyed are moonlighting in order to

supplement their salaries. Teachers in Texas are still earning only 68% of what it takes to support a family of four in a solidly middle-class, but not affluent fashion. Males are scarce and are considering leaving in even greater numbers than are females. Unhappiness with students and administrators add to the dissatisfaction with low salaries.

There is one note of encouragement. The rapid decline in real buying power has been checked over the past two years, due to larger than average salary increases, although teaching salaries have made no gain on cost of living.

If inflation is not drastically reduced and teaching salaries are not drastically increased, we see no reason to revise our prediction of a severe teaching shortage in the near future. We believe males will continue to avoid teaching or to leave the field once they have entered it. Moonlighting will continue to increase, and will continue to decrease teaching effectiveness.

We plan to repeat this study every two years for the remainder of the decade. We hope to see financial support for education reach an all-time high. We hope to see public education and public educators prosper. In short, we hope to see our predictions fail to come true. Unless the educational environment improves drastically, we fear for

the well-being of public education in Texas and in the nation. As we said in 1980, time will tell.

References

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Table One

TEACHERS AND MOONLIGHTING

DIRECTIONS: Please circle or answer all items that apply to you. Add comments if you find a question to be vague.

1. What is your age?..... Years_____
2. Sex..... Male Female
3. Marital Status..... Married Single Other
4. If married, does your spouse work?..... Yes No Does Not Apply
5. What is your highest degree?..... Bachelor's Master's Doctorate
6. Are you the major bread winner in your household?.... Yes No Equal
7. Are you seriously considering leaving the teaching profession? ..... Yes No
   If yes, why are you considering leaving? _____
8. In what type of district do you teach?..... Urban Suburban Rural
9. What grade level do you primarily teach?..... K-5 6-8 9-12
10. How many years have you taught in the public schools?..... Years_____
11. What is your current teaching salary per year?..... $_____
12. Do you have an extra job during the summer when you are not under contract to your district?..... Yes No
13. How much do you earn extra during the summer?..... $_____
14. Do you have an extra job during the regular school year to supplement your teaching salary? (Include school-related and nonschool-related jobs. For example: school bus driver, salesperson, bookkeeper, etc.)..... Yes No

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If your answer to Question 14 is yes, please answer the following questions.

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15. Do you feel that the quality of your teaching would improve if you did not have a second job during the regular school year?..... Yes No
16. How much extra money do you earn during the regular school year from the moonlighting job?..... $_____
17. How many hours per week during the regular school year do you spend working at the extra job?..... Hours_____
18. Would you quit working the second job if your salary was increased adequately?..... Yes No
19. How large a raise in your teaching salary would you have to get to enable you to give up moonlighting during the regular school year?..... $_____
20. What is your extra job during the regular school year? (Please give a job title such as bookkeeper, rancher, clerk, waitress, etc., not the name of your employer.)..... _____

Table Two

Some results from the 1980 and the 1982 Survey of Texas Public School Teachers.

	1980	1982
Average Salary Per Year	$14,113	$17,351
Average Age	38.6	39.2
Sex	M-19.9% F-80.1%	M-19.7% F-80.3%
Married	76.6%	74.9%
Spouse Works	70.1%	69.6%
Degree		
Bachelor's	63.9	62.5
Master's	35.7	37.2
Doctorate	.3	.3
Is the Major Breadwinner	39.9%	39.8%
Type of District		
Urban	40.5%	43.3%
Suburban	32.6%	36.7%
Rural	26.8%	20.1%
Grade Taught		
K-5	50.9%	49.8%
6-8	19.9%	19.7%
9-12	29.2%	30.4%
Average Years Experience	11.8	12.1
Considering Leaving Teaching	38.4%	37.3%
Extra Job in Summer	30.2%	36.4%
Average Summer Earnings	$1252.00	$2076.00
Moonlight During the Year	22.0%	28.8%
Avg. Moonlight Hours Weekly	13.6	11.9
Avg. Moonlight Earnings	$2799.00	$3189.00
Believes Moonlighting is Detrimental to Teaching	64.1%	68.5%
Prefer to Quit Moonlighting	75%	75%